



MASTER FILE

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DSSD CENSUS 2000 Procedures and Operations Memorandum Series #G-27

MEMORANDUM FOR

Brian Monaghan
Lead Assistant Division Chief for Censuses
Field Division

Attention:

Management Training Branch
Field Division

From:

Howard Hogan 
Chief, Decennial Statistical Studies Division

Prepared By:

Meiliawati Iskandar
Decennial Statistical Studies Division

Subject:

Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Personal Interview
Observation

I. Introduction

I observed the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Personal Interviewing on June 26-27, 2000 in the Olympia, Washington State region (LCO 2740). The observation area was an urban area where Large Block Subsampling was done. I observed interviews on people living in an apartment complex, single family homes and duplexes. The interviewer and I agreed that we should just meet at the place where I stayed since he lives in the area and the interview cases were around the area also.

II. The Observation

On the first day we visited a two level apartment complex in a neighborhood consisting of some shopping centers, gas station and single family homes. In the morning, we found mostly older persons or mothers with small children. Since we started at nine in the morning, some people that we contacted were still in their pajamas and certainly were not

very happy to have us knocking on their door. Nevertheless, they understood that we were just doing our job and they answered all the questions.

When we started in the morning, we went to the office of the apartment complex to get the map of the complex but it was still closed. We went back some time later. The assistant manager was not very cooperative. Maybe she was tired of assisting the previous census activities which she said took three days. She could not give us a map but she pointed out the apartments that we were looking for. She mentioned that four of the apartments on our list were vacant. However, the interviewer did the right thing and visited the supposedly vacant apartments. Some of those apartments turned out to be occupied.

We went back to the same complex around six in the evening. As expected, most people were eating their dinner or preparing their dinner, but all cooperated anyway. We also visited some single family homes and duplexes in the second day.

The introduction of the interview was useful because people wondered why there was another census activity since they have already turned in their forms. Most did not argue after the interviewer explained the purpose of this interview but a few did. However, they finally answered all the questions. An exception was a lady who said she had been visited several times, and was interviewed by phone even though she had already turned in her forms. She let us know her annoyance at the census activities. At first she refused to let us do the interview. But the interviewer kept dealing with her and promised to write a note about her case and she finally answered all the questions.

Difficult Cases

- An apartment number could not be found and according to the assistant manager, there was no apartment with that number.
- A single family home that according to a neighbor had been bought by someone not living there. The owner only came from time to time to do some work on the house which seemed to be in poor condition.
- A single family home that according to a neighbor was owned by a couple who mostly lived in their boat in the nearby bay.
- A single family home that seemed to be vacant. A neighbor said that he had never seen the owner since he moved there in October.

Interesting Cases

- A couple of people moved from one apartment to another within the same apartment complex after census day.
- A baby was born after census day but the mother had answered no when asked whether anyone moved into the place after census day.
- The single occupant moved into the house on Census day.
- In the apartment complex we visited the apartment number 179 was followed by number 1710, 1711, etc. And there was no apartment numbered 160, 170, 180, etc. This maybe the case where the first two digits were the Within Structure Description

and the number(s) after that was the Within Structure Identifier which started from one.

III. Conclusion

Since the interviewer had worked in the Housing Unit phase in the same area, he was quite familiar with the neighborhoods. He knew how to handle different interviewee responses and was sensitive to their situations but always focuses on getting the information. The interviewer always entered explanations on the Note section for out of the ordinary cases. The laptop worked properly during the interview except that it was difficult for the interviewer to see the screen when there was no shade from the sun.

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